

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4644

S E C R E T AMMAN 3362

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, JO, US

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS

REF: AMMAN 3359

1. EVENING MAY 19 RIFAI AND I HAD BRIEF CHANCE TO TALK FURTHER ABOUT SADAT VISIT AND HIS TRIP TO SYRIA MAY 19 AS INDICATED REFTEL. WE WILL ALSO GET TOGETHER AGAIN LATER TODAY.

2. PRINCIPAL POINT NOT COVERED IN EARLIER MESSAGE SEEMS TO BE FACT THAT BOTH SADAT AND ASAD SHOW AMAZING CONVERGENCE ON BEING SOUR ON PLO. ASAD APPARENTLY FED UP WITH INDECISIVENESS AND INTERNAL DIVISIONS IN BODY. NEVERTHELESS, RIFAI LEFT ME WITH IMPRESSION THAT ASAD WILL STILL TRY TO PUSH FOR SOME GOJ/PLO ACCOMMODATION, BUT UNDERSTANDS WHY JORDAN WILL NOT MOVE. SADAT, RIFAI SAID, BELIEVES WHOLE ORGANIZATION IS SO FRACTURED AND RUDDERLESS AS TO REQUIRE ONLY MINIMUM PUBLIC ATTENTION AND CANNOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN SUBSTANTIVE TERMS. (MAY WELL BE BOTH WERE SPEAKING FOR THEIR JORDANIAN AUDIENCE.)

3. RIFAI NOTED ASAD REMAINS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT LEBANON. HE FEARS ANOTHER OUTBREAK AND FURTHER DISINTEGRATION OF GOVERNMENT AND ORDER. HE SAYS HE

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LIKES FRANJIEH AND WILL STAY OUT UNLESS ISRAELIS

USE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO MOVE IN. IN SUCH CASE
RIFAI SAYS HE DOES NOT THINK WE CAN COUNT ON ASAD
JUST STANDING BY.

4. RIFAI ASKED THAT I PASS ON TO YOU HIS AND KING'S
STRONG HOPES THAT THEY CAN HAVE SUBSTANTIVE REPORT
FROM YOU AFTER YOUR TALK WITH GROMYKO AND AGAIN
AFTER SALZBURG MEETING.

5. BOTH KING AND RIFAI YESTERDAY TOLD ME THAT THEY
WERE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE WIDE NUMBER OF REPORTS
THEY HAD BEEN RECEIVING CONCERNING ASSASSINATION PLOTS
AGAINST MIDDLE EAST AND OTHER LEADERS. THEY HOPED THAT
THE PRESIDENT IN CONNECTION WITH HIS SALZBURG TRIP WOULD TAKE
ALL POSSIBLE SECURITY MEASURES. I THANKED THEM
FOR THEIR CONCERN AND SAID OF COURSE I WOULD PASS
ON THIS INFORMATION AND WAS SURE THAT EVERYTHING
POSSIBLE WAS BEING DONE TO PROVIDE FOR THE
PRESIDENT'S SECURITY.
PICKERING

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